

The President's Daily Brief

28 March 1972

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THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

28 March 1972

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

Brezhnev's recent overture for ties to the Common Market was serious, but many Market members are being cautious about responding. (Page 1)

A Soviet survey of North Vietnam's air defenses may lead to deliveries of additional aid from Moscow. (Page 2)

[redacted] Romania
Warsaw Pact [redacted] (Page 3)

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The political situation in Cambodia is discussed on Page 4.

South Korea [redacted]
Chinese [redacted] (Page 5)

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Annex [redacted] Soviet-Egyptian

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USSR - COMMON MARKET

Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko has confirmed that Brezhnev's overture for relations between the Soviet-led Council of Mutual Economic Assistance and the Common Market during a speech on 20 March was a deliberate departure from past policy. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] the timing of Brezhnev's announcement was partly determined by a wish to strengthen Chancellor Brandt's hand in the debate over ratification of the Moscow and Warsaw treaties.

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There are other good reasons for Brezhnev's vague signal, however. Not the least of these is the probability that beginning next year the East Europeans will be told that they must negotiate their trade agreements through the market rather than bilaterally. Yet another reason is the Soviet desire to maintain control over East Europe.

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[REDACTED]

While accepting Brezhnev's speech as a turning point, officials of the Common Market have reacted cautiously. They are concerned that Brezhnev's formula implies a demand for market recognition of Moscow's Council on Mutual Economic Assistance. A

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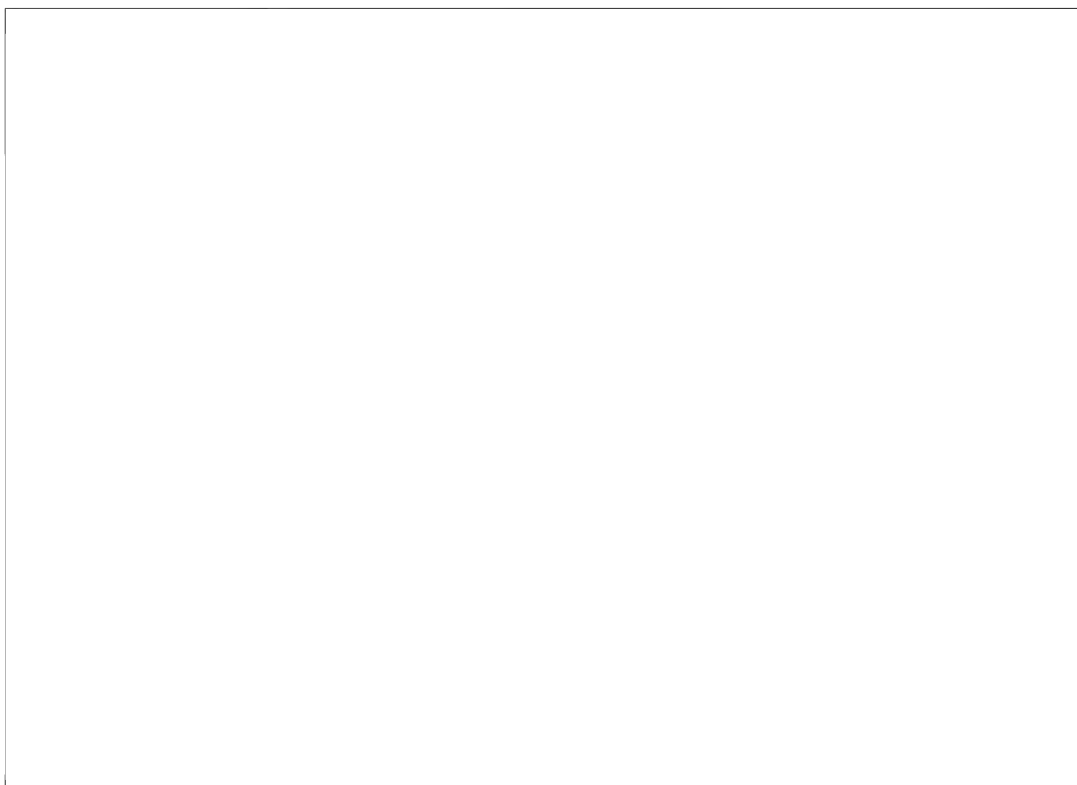
USSR - NORTH VIETNAM

Soviet Deputy Defense Minister Batitskiy visited North Vietnam from 17 to 27 March to inspect all facets of Hanoi's air defenses and most likely to discuss future Soviet assistance. Batitskiy was accompanied by several air defense specialists.

Last year, Hanoi made significant improvements in its air defense network and received equipment for ten new SA-2 battalions from the USSR. This equipment, the largest Soviet increment to North Vietnam's air defense forces since 1967, accounted for \$45 million of the estimated \$100 million in military aid, which Moscow provided Hanoi last year.

The Soviets see an opportunity for themselves in North Vietnam's current discomfort about Chinese dealings with the US, and we believe that Batitskiy was instructed to be receptive to Hanoi's requests for additional air defense equipment. The resumption of more aggressive aerial patrolling and the rehabilitation of North Vietnam's forward airbases in recent months also suggests that Hanoi may have asked for Soviet aid in developing better command and control procedures, embodying more sophisticated tactics than have been possible up to now. The North Vietnamese may have gotten what they wanted; on the last day of Batitskiy's stay they lavished public praise on the work of his delegation.

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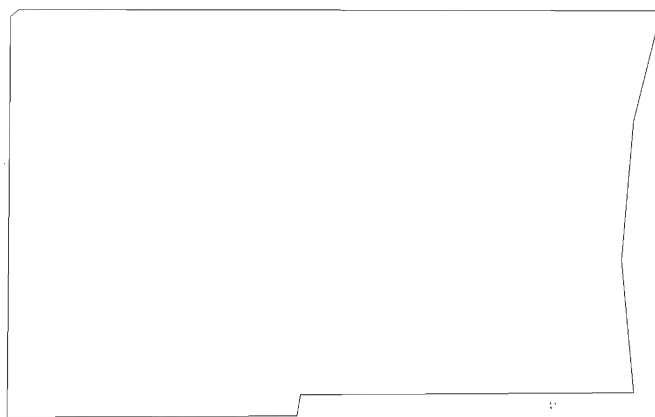


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ROMANIA - WARSAW PACT



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CAMBODIA

President Lon Nol has promoted Sirik Matak to full general and persuaded him to become "chief delegate" of the armed forces and chairman of the armed forces chiefs of staff [REDACTED]

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Although Matak has accepted, he is still smarting over Lon Nol's failure to support him more strongly in the face of student attacks on his performance in the preceding government. Furthermore, Matak's actual duties in the labyrinthine administration of the present government have apparently not yet been precisely defined, and he may have difficulty in re-establishing a strong role for himself. In any event, his reappearance in the government will not sit well with student agitators in Phnom Penh.

Lon Nol has, however, made some other moves to try to dampen the three-week old student unrest. Some government-sponsored counter-demonstrations have been organized. More important, Lon Nol has publicly announced [REDACTED]

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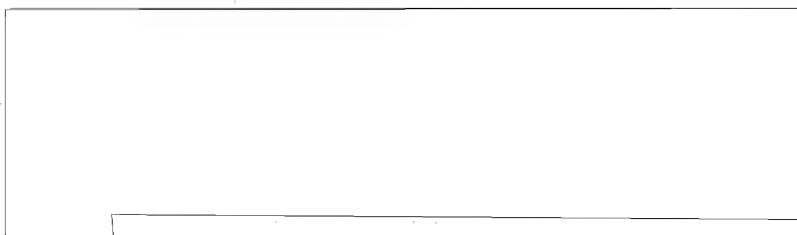
[REDACTED] that a new constitution would be promulgated "in two weeks."

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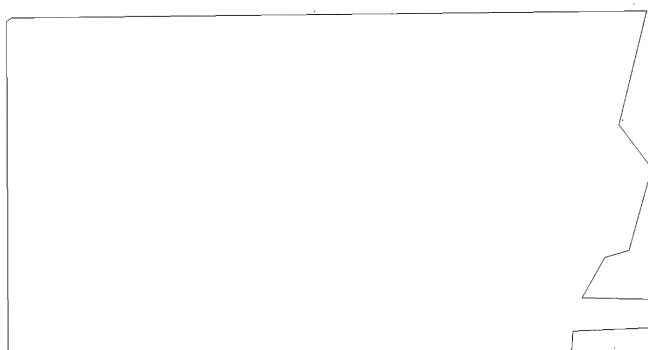
We expect that Lon Nol will see to it that the constitution places the real power of government in the hands of the president.

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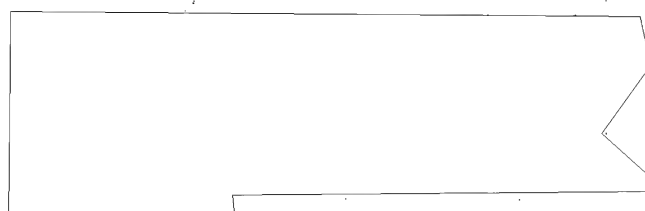
SOUTH KOREA - CHINA



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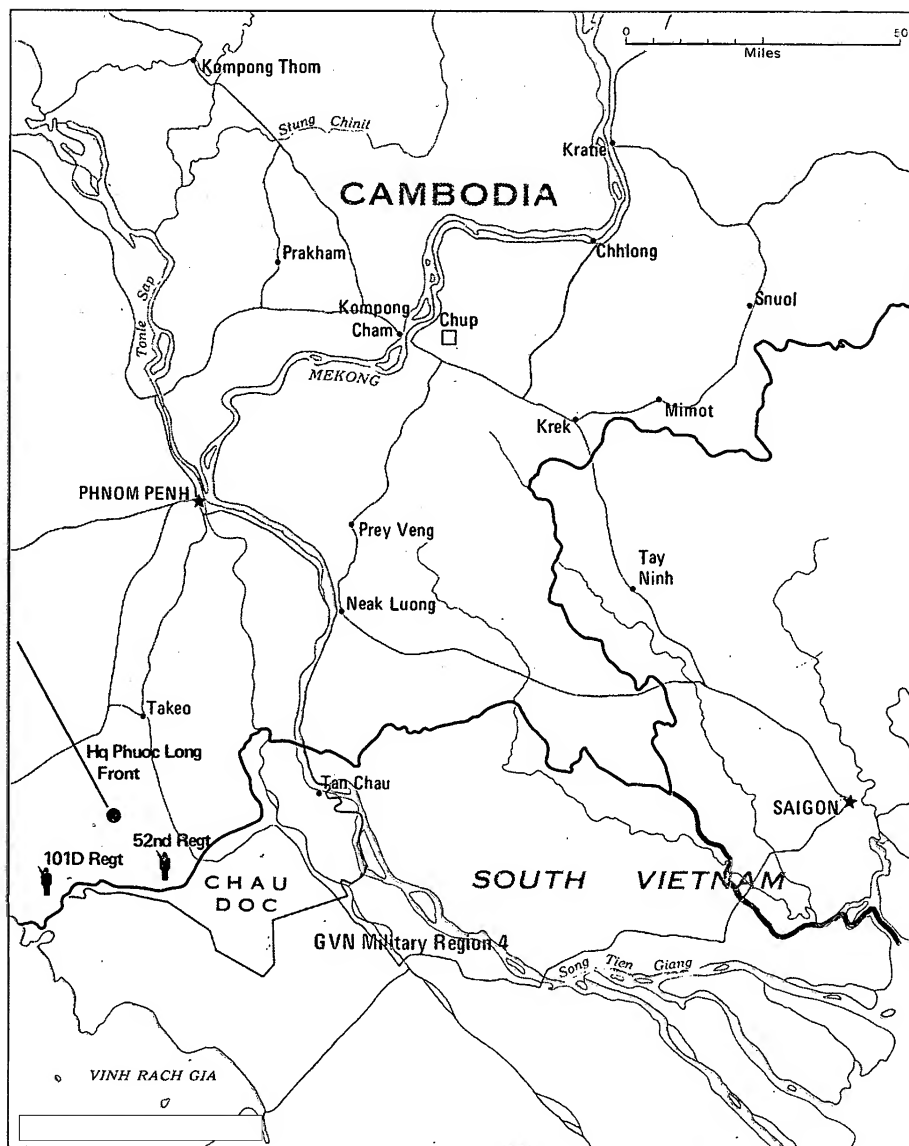


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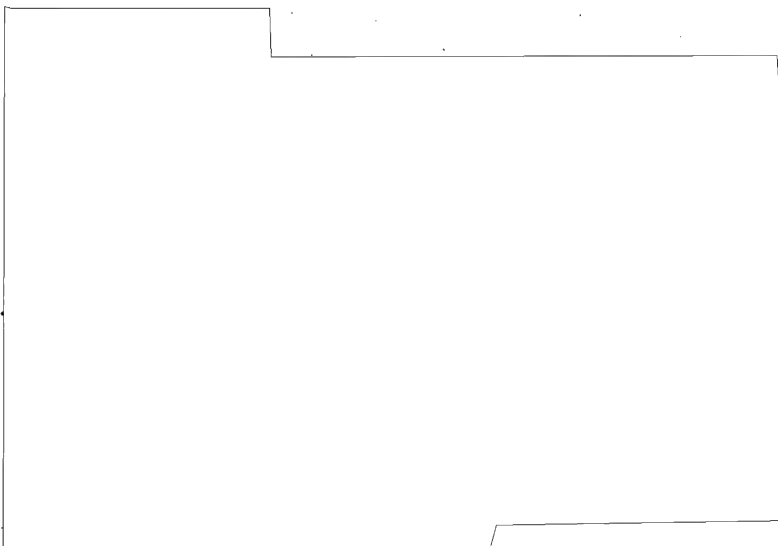
South Vietnam - Cambodia: Radio direction finding indicates that since 20 March the headquarters of the enemy's division-size Phuoc Long Front and the headquarters of its two combat regiments have moved to within a few miles of the Cambodian - South Vietnamese border in the Mekong delta region. The front has not sent its units this far south since June 1970. South Vietnamese positions on the Cambodian side of the border have come under artillery fire during the past several days, possibly from some of the recently arrived enemy units.

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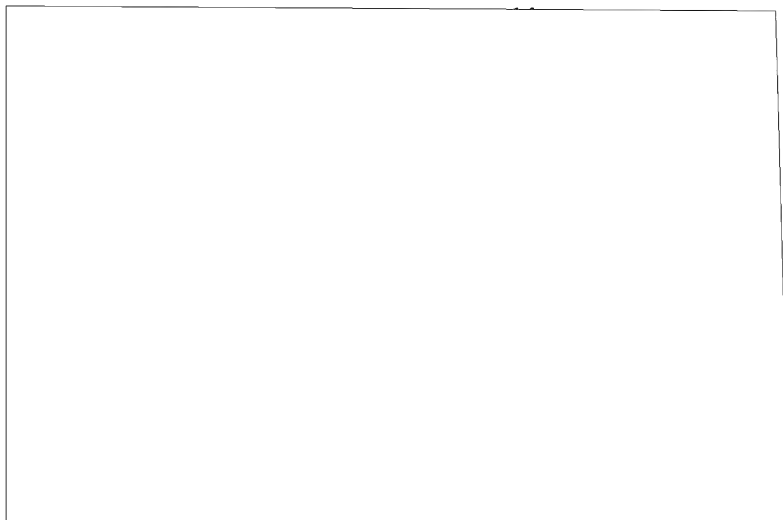
STRAINS IN SOVIET-EGYPTIAN RELATIONS



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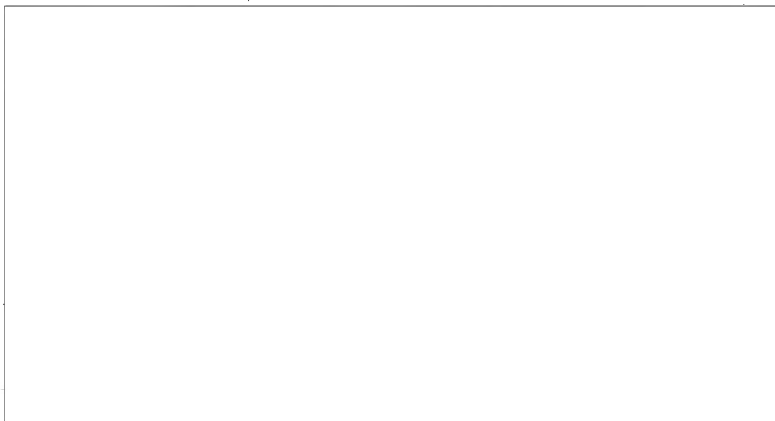
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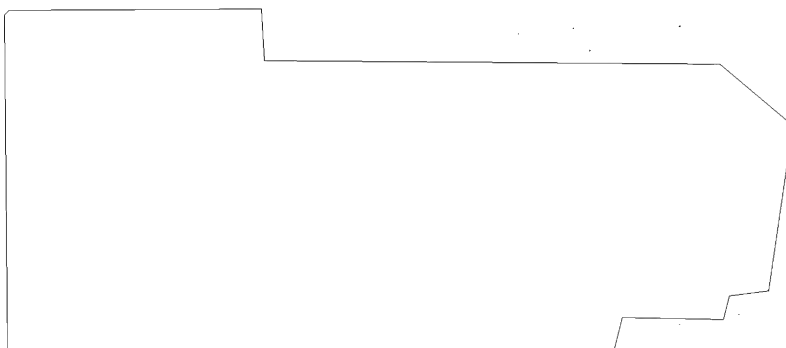
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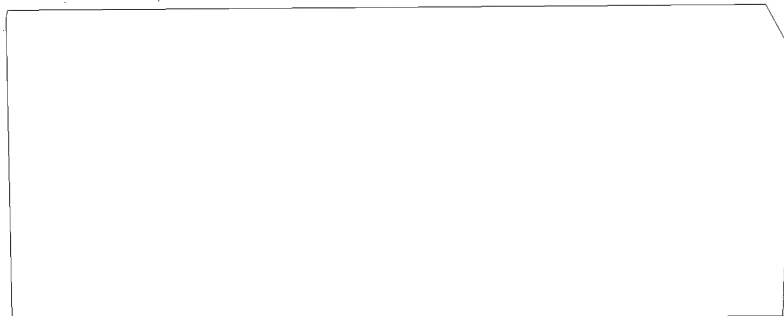
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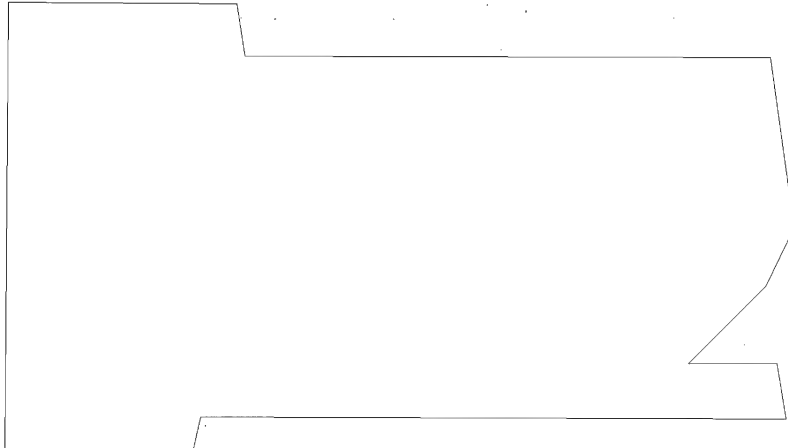
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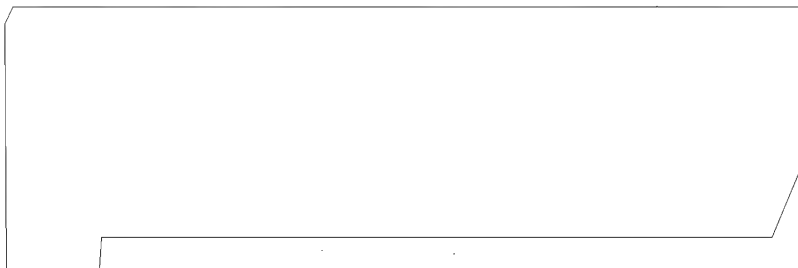
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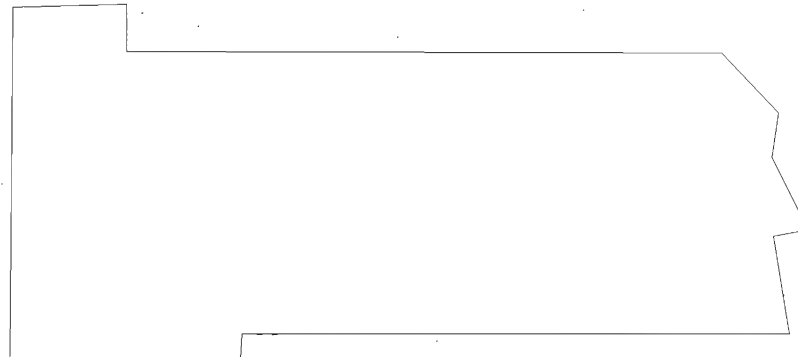
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